CLAIMS

1.   A method for supplying hierarchical supplementary information related to printed books in a portal comprising the steps of:

establishing a portal of supplementary information related to printed books, said supplementary information stored in hypermedia documents retrievable through said portal;

distributing to a user base a plurality of different printed books;

associating each different printed book with a common uniform address, each said common address referencing a corresponding first hypermedia document in said portal, said first hypermedia document comprising links to secondary hypermedia documents, said links corresponding to different ones of user classes;

providing a kiosk for interacting with said portal;

receiving from a user in said user base through said kiosk a user-specified common address corresponding to one of said printed books;

responsive to receiving said user-specified common address, displaying through said kiosk in said portal a first hypermedia document corresponding to said user-specified common address;

identifying in said first hypermedia document corresponding to said user-specified common address a user class associated with said user; and,

responsive to identifying said associated user class, displaying through said kiosk one of said secondary hypermedia documents, said secondary hypermedia documents having supplementary information pertaining to said books associated with said user-specified common address, said supplementary information being consonant with said associated user class.

2.   The method according to claim 1, wherein said associating step comprises the step of including with at least one printed book among said printed books a bookmark having a reference to common uniform address, wherein said common

4 uniform address is an address of a first hypermedia document common to all said

5 printed books.

1 3. The method according to claim 1, wherein said providing step comprises

2 the step of:

3 positioning a kiosk in a retail store;

4 said kiosk comprising a computer system executing a hypermedia document

5 browser for displaying said portal, a display for displaying hypermedia documents

6 loaded in said browser, and control input means for accepting input from a user of said

7 portal.

1 4. The method according to claim 3, further comprising the step of:

2 providing fixed storage with said kiosk;

3 said fixed storage storing said portal.

1 5. The method according to claim 3, further comprising the step of:

2 connecting said kiosk to a computer communications network; and,

3 enabling said browser to retrieve hypermedia documents from said computer

4 communications network.

1 6. The method according to claim 4, further comprising the step of:

2 connecting said kiosk to a computer communications network; and,

3 enabling said browser to retrieve hypermedia documents from said computer

4 communications network.

1 7. The method according to claim 3, further comprising the step of:

2 connecting said kiosk to a POS system in said retail store;

3 enabling said browser to communicate with said POS system through said

4 connection; and,

5 performing purchase transactions of printed books through a hypermedia

6 document displayed in said browser, said purchase transaction consummated by said

7 POS system.

1 8.   The method according to claim 1, wherein said identifying step comprises

2 identifying a user in said user base with a particular user class said user class selected

3 from the group consisting of adults and children.

1 9.   The method according to claim 8, wherein said step of displaying

2 secondary hypermedia documents comprises the steps of:

3 responsive to identifying said associated user class, where said identified

4 associated user class corresponds to a child user identity, displaying through said kiosk

5 one of said secondary hypermedia documents having child-oriented supplementary

6 information particular to said printed books; and,

7 responsive to identifying said associated user class, where said identified

8 associated user class corresponds to an adult user identity, displaying through said

9 kiosk one of said secondary hypermedia documents having adult-oriented

10 supplementary information particular to said printed books.

1 10.   The method according to claim 8, wherein said step of displaying

2 secondary hypermedia documents comprises the steps of:

3 responsive to identifying said associated user class, where said identified

4 associated user class corresponds to a child user identity, displaying through said kiosk

5 one of said secondary hypermedia documents having child-oriented supplementary

6 information particular to said printed books; and,

7 responsive to identifying said associated user class, where said identified

8 associated user class corresponds to an adult user identity, verifying said adult user

9 identity of said user; and,

10 responsive to said verification of said adult user identity, displaying through said

11 kiosk one of said secondary hypermedia documents having adult-oriented

12 supplementary information particular to said printed books.

1 11.   The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of:

2 including with each said secondary hypermedia document, a plurality of

3 hyperlinks referring to additional hypermedia documents;

4 said additional hypermedia documents provided by at least one of the following:

5 museums, art galleries, colleges, universities, foundations and government

6 administrations and agencies.

1 12.   The method according to claim 1, wherein said step of displaying

2 secondary hypermedia documents comprises the steps of:

3 providing a secondary hypermedia document having a plurality of hyperlinks

4 each hyperlink corresponding to one of said plurality of different printed books;

5 accepting a selection of one of said hyperlinks by said user, said selection

6 corresponding to a particular printed book; and,

7 in a third hypermedia document, presenting each page of said particular printed

8 book to said user.

1 13.   The method according to claim 12, wherein said presenting step

2 comprises the step of successively visually displaying each page of said particular

3 printed book at a rate exceeding a speed under which a child user can read each word

4 on each said page.

1 14.   The method according to claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

2 providing a fourth hypermedia document having a plurality of hyperlinks, each

3   said hyperlink referring to a common activity having supplemental information pertaining

4   to said particular printed book;

5   accepting a selection of one of said hyperlinks by said user; and,

6   in response to said selection, providing a fifth hypermedia document containing

7   said common activity pertaining to said particular printed book.

1   15.   The method according to claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

2   providing an electronic guide in said secondary hypermedia document for

3   supplying audio prompts to said user; and,

4   outputting said audio prompt in coordination with said electronic guide, said

5   audio prompt prompting said user to select one of said hyperlinks displayed in said

6   secondary hypermedia document.

1   16.   The method according to claim 1, wherein said establishing step

2   comprises the steps of:

3   establishing a portal of supplementary information related to printed books, said

4   supplementary information stored in hypermedia documents; and,

5   storing said hypermedia documents in a fixed storage;

6   said hypermedia documents being retrievable from said fixed storage by a

7   hypermedia document browser responsive to user requests for said hypermedia

8   documents.

1   17.   The method according to claim 16, wherein said storing step comprises

2   the step of:

3   storing said hypermedia documents in a fixed storage in a hypermedia document

4   server connected to a computer communications network;

5   said hypermedia documents being retrievable through said computer

6   communications network responsive to requests by hypermedia document browsers

7   communicatively connected to said hypermedia document server.

1   18.   The method according to claim 16, wherein said storing step comprises

2   the step of:

3   storing said hypermedia documents in a fixed storage in said kiosk;

4   said hypermedia documents being retrievable from said fixed storage responsive

5   to requests by a hypermedia document browser executing in said kiosk.

1   19.   The method according to claim 18, wherein said fixed storage is selected

2   from the group consisting of a CD-ROM, a DVD, an optical disk, a digital audio tape, a

3   floppy disk, a hard disk and a removable disk.